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C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 000222

SIPDIS

STATE FOR DRL, WHA/CCA, DRL/MLA, IO/SHA, AND EAP/ANZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/16/2015

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [CU](#) [PREL](#) [NZ](#) [CHR](#) [UNHRC](#)

SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND ON CHR AND THE CHR RESOLUTION ON CUBA

REF: A. SECSTATE 42847

[1](#)B. SECSTATE 44494

Classified By: Political-Economic Counselor Katherine Hadda,
for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

[1](#)1. (C) Acting Political-Economic Counselor provided Refs A and B demarches concerning the 61st Session of the UN Commission of Human Rights (CHR) and the importance of the U.S.-sponsored CHR Cuba resolution to Val Meyer, Deputy Director of the Human Rights Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). Meyer promised to discuss with Embassy officers New Zealand's position on all the CHR issues once her Ministry had had a chance to review our positions.

[1](#)2. (C) On March 16, Pol-Econ Counselor followed up with Meyer and in particular stressed our desire that New Zealand co-sponsor the Cuba resolution. Meyer said that a memo with recommendations for all CHR issues was being sent up to Foreign Minister Phil Goff for his approval. While MFAT staff hoped for fast action on the memo, Meyer suspected the Minister would not approve it before the weekend as his schedule is very busy.

[1](#)3. (C) Pol-Econ Counselor told Meyer that the United States hopes that New Zealand will co-sponsor the country-specific resolutions highlighted in reftels, and in particular the Cuba resolution. She pointed out that New Zealand officials have in the past told us that they regret attempts by other countries to water down human rights resolution language. For similar reasons, our proposed resolution on Cuba has been crafted to avoid tussles over language and to instead draw attention to the CHR's repeated resolutions on Cuba and to invite the CHR itself to report on its findings regarding Cuba. Pol-Econ Counselor told Myer that despite the long string of resolutions, human rights conditions in Cuba have slipped back over time, not improved. Meyer suggested that, once Minister Goff's decision has been made, Pol-Econ Counselor meet with her and MFAT's Cuba specialists to discuss our views on Cuba.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: Based on Meyer's comments and New Zealand's positions on similar requests, we do not anticipate New Zealand will agree to co-sponsor the resolution on Cuba. Nor is it likely that New Zealand will co-sponsor the resolution on Belarus or Burma. In the past, New Zealand officials have disappointingly only chosen to co-sponsor human rights resolutions concerning countries with which New Zealand has diplomatic ties, on the grounds that New Zealand's influence will be greatest there. The only exceptions have been cases such as Sudan, in which New Zealand perceives that there is widespread international agreement that violations are particularly egregious.
Burnett